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## AUERBACH AND NIETZSCHE

### I

It would seem at first that the life and works of Berthold Auerbach would offer nothing but contrasts and dissimilarities to those of Friedrich Nietzsche. The former, as nearly devoid of pride and envy as it is possible for a human being to be, in love with mankind and always surrounded by friends,<sup>1</sup> constantly associating with people of substantial renown, decorated with various orders which he held in light esteem,<sup>2</sup> influenced in his early days by Spinoza, Jean Paul, and Walter Scott, is known today primarily as the portrayer of loquacious German villagers. The latter, a stoic<sup>3</sup> after the fashion of Heraclitus, arrogantly proclaiming himself the greatest of modern writers and envious of anyone who also gained distinction, avoided by the spiritual grandees of his day, including Wagner after a while, the recipient of no coveted badges of honor, influenced in his early days by the Greeks, Schopenhauer, and Wagner, is known today as the author of many letters, a few poems, some essays and lectures, and several thousand aphorisms that refute current opinion, set men to thinking, and arouse about as much antagonism as admiration.

Auerbach was always pedagogical, had unlimited faith in America, lived remote from the Romance peoples, greatly admired Germany and the Germans, was patient with Prussia, though he disliked Bismarck, took an interest in many things, and always wanted to learn. Nietzsche loathed pedagogy and the books written on it, despised

<sup>1</sup> Some of Auerbach's best-known friends were Du Bois-Reymond, George Bancroft, Theodor Mommsen, Spielhagen, D. Fr. Strauss, Uhland, Rückert, Otto Ludwig, Ernst Rietschel, Jakob Grimm, and Mörike. To judge indeed from his letters, he was at least personally acquainted with all of the prominent men of his day. Nietzsche's best friends were Erwin Rohde, Peter Gast, Heinrich Stein, and Carl Fuchs; and only these. And who were these men? We are obliged to turn to an encyclopedia to answer the question. Overbeck's friendship for Nietzsche has often been questioned.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Georg Brandes, *Berthold Auerbach* (München, 1902), p. 108; and in Auerbach's *Briefe an Jakob Auerbach*, January 7, 1862, Auerbach tells how the order he had just received from the Duke of Coburg-Gotha embarrassed him.

<sup>3</sup> For one of Nietzsche's significant remarks concerning stoicism, see *Morgenröthe*, IV, 143, of the Naumann edition (Leipzig). This edition is always referred to in this paper.

America as few Europeans have, felt himself at one with the Romance peoples, spoke even more harshly of German than did his prototype Hölderlin, could not endure Prussia, though he reservedly admired Bismarck as the type of a strong German, confined his interests after all within a narrow circle, and abounded in self-sufficiency of opinion.

Auerbach was gentle and restful, sympathetic and trustful; Nietzsche distrusted nearly everything, especially modern education and German civilization, and preached the doctrine of force and pitilessness. The one made journeys to the Black Forest so that he might return to his work refreshed, the other to the Engadine so as to be out of the sight of men. True, they both admired Goethe and hated Gutzkow, suffered from a common lack of humor, studied first theology and then philosophy, longed for disciples, defended the Jews, and found an ardent advocate in Georg Brandes. But these are minor matters.

As a writer, Auerbach, despite his localized *Dorfgeschichten*, moved by choice in accustomed grooves; Nietzsche aspired to be the transvaluator of all values. This is one reason why the former has been studied too little, the latter too much. And now, after extensive reading in both, it seems to the writer that there are at least five phases of Auerbach's works the exhaustive treatment of which would be productive of lasting results: (1) his style with especial reference to his vocabulary; (2) his conception of America as colored by his interest in emigrating Germans; (3) his pedagogical ideas as a student of Rousseau; (4) his indebtedness to Spinoza; (5) his influence on Nietzsche. Let us consider this last topic in its more general aspects and with especial reference to *Auf der Höhe* and *Also sprach Zarathustra*.

Auerbach was born in 1812, and died twenty days before reaching his seventieth birthday in 1882, the year of the completion of Nietzsche's *Fröhliche Wissenschaft*, and only seven years before his mental collapse. Nietzsche was then but little known in Europe. It was, indeed, not until 1886 that Georg Brandes delivered his series of lectures on him at the University of Copenhagen, an act of appreciation for which Nietzsche was devoutly grateful. It was the first attempt to make propaganda for him outside of the Romance countries, and very little had then been made even there. Auerbach

seems never to have read him. There is not a single reference to Nietzsche in any accessible material on or by Auerbach.<sup>1</sup> This means nothing, however, for Nietzsche was hardly known at all in Germany in 1882. Richard M. Meyer claims<sup>2</sup> to have been one of the first to lecture on him—in 1902.

And Nietzsche referred to Auerbach but three times. The first of these was in a letter<sup>3</sup> to his mother, written in February, 1862, while he was a student at Pforta. Nietzsche was then seventeen years old. It is a delightful note concerning his sister Elisabeth, who was then in a pension in Dresden, and his own affairs at Pforta, with an occasional sententious observation prophetic of the future Nietzsche. And then, after finishing the letter, he appended the following: "Zum Lesen, wofür Du nun viel Zeit haben wirst, schlage ich Dir Auerbach's *Barfüssele* vor, was mich hoch entzückt hat."

That Nietzsche liked this story is at once surprising and natural. In it we are told of the barefooted Amrei and her somewhat stupid brother Dami. They are orphans. The brother comes to America and then returns to Germany. Unpromising at first, he makes good partly through the assistance of his sister. Amrei marries Johannes and all ends well. It is a charming story for an imaginative boy. We can easily see how the romantic descriptions of nature, the interpolated fairy tales, and the riddles might have pleased the juvenile Nietzsche, whom his schoolmates had not even then ceased calling "der kleine Pastor," though it sounds but little like the ferocious Nietzsche of about 1880.

But Auerbach struck three notes in this story which accord beautifully with what might be called Nietzsche's three major tones: the stupidity of the herd, the virtue of being alone, and the vice of conventionality. These are, to be sure, worn themes, but there is a directness about Auerbach's commitments that sounds Nietzschean. Of the herd Auerbach says (IX, 50): "Die Tiere, die in Herden leben, sind alle Jedes für sich allein dumm." He very frequently

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Berthold Auerbach. *Briefe an seinen Freund Jakob Auerbach*, edited by Fr. Spielhagen, Frankfurt a.M., 1884. There are two large volumes covering the period from 1830 to Auerbach's death.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Richard M. Meyer, *Nietzsche. Sein Leben und seine Werke* (München, 1913), p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Friedrich Nietzsches *gesammelte Briefe*, edited by Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche (Leipzig, 1909), V, 21.

compared men with animals and occasionally to the advantage of the animals. Nietzsche did the same. As to being alone, also an exceedingly common topic with Auerbach, he says (IX, 76): "Allein, o wie gut ist Allein. Jeder kann sich Alles selber machen . . . aber nur unter einem Beding: er muss allein bleiben. Allein. Allein. Sonst hilft's nichts." There is no one theme upon which Auerbach wrote more than on this one, and Nietzsche likewise.

The most striking parallel to Nietzsche, however, is found in Auerbach's remarks concerning convention and morality. The passage reads as follows (IX, 264): "Nicht die Sittlichkeit regiert die Welt, sondern eine verhärtete Form derselben: die Sitte. Wie die Welt nun einmal geworden ist, verzeiht sie eher eine Verletzung der Sittlichkeit als eine Verletzung der Sitte. Wohl den Zeiten und den Völkern, in denen Sitte und Sittlichkeit noch Eins ist. Aller Kampf, der sich im Grossen wie im Kleinen, im Allgemeinen wie im Einzelnen abspielt, dreht sich darum, den Widerspruch dieser Beiden wieder aufzuheben, und die erstarrte Form der Sitte wieder für die innere Sittlichkeit flüssig zu machen, das Geprägte nach seinem innern Wertgehalte neu zu bestimmen." In other words, Auerbach says that morality (*Sittlichkeit*) is much more important than custom (*Sitte*), that the world, however, will pardon a breach of morality more quickly than it will pardon a breach of custom, and that it is necessary to give a new meaning to that which has become fixed by usage—to transvaluate old values.<sup>1</sup>

It is not necessary to list all of the passages in which Nietzsche discussed *Sitte* and *Sittlichkeit*. The most striking ones are found in *Morgenröthe* (V, 15-28), *Menschliches, Allzumenschliches* (II, 97-99), *Zur Genealogie der Moral* (VII, 345, 422). His idea was precisely the same as Auerbach's: to be conventional is to be *sittlich*; to be original is to be *unsittlich*. He said (IV, 18) that to the valiant old Roman, Christ was *böse* because he looked after his own salvation. In the same connection Nietzsche said: "Unter der Herrschaft der Sittlichkeit der Sitte hat die Originalität jeder Art

<sup>1</sup> The entire situation here is truly Nietzschean. Johannes' conduct was considered by the *Pfarrer* to be moral, but "aus der Ordnung; es hatte seinen besonderen Weg von der Landstrasse ab." Auerbach is gentler than Nietzsche but like him when he says: "Wenn heutigen Tages ein Prophet aufstünde, müsste er vorher sein Staatsexamen machen, ob's auch in der alten Ordnung ist, was er will." See p. 265. (All of the references are to the Cotta edition of Auerbach's works.)

ein böses Gewissen bekommen." And "Die Sittlichkeit wirkt der Entstehung neuer und besserer Sitten entgegen: sie verdummt." What worried both Auerbach and Nietzsche, though neither ever said so in so many words, was the fact that, etymologically speaking, *moral* comes from an oblique case of Latin *mos*. And when Nietzsche proclaimed himself the firm immoralist he meant only that his conscience would not allow him to pay homage to petrified conventionality. The idea was first expressed, however, in a book by Auerbach which Nietzsche read and enjoyed. And Auerbach too, returned to the same idea many times. Like Nietzsche, he was a great repeater.

The next reference to Auerbach was made ten years later, in 1872, in the second lecture "Über die Zukunft unserer Bildungs-Anstalten" (IX, 262). It is here that Nietzsche raised the question "ob Auerbach und Gutzkow wirklich Dichter sind: man kann sie einfach vor Ekel nicht mehr lesen, damit ist die Frage entschieden." The German *Gymnasium* has rarely received a more trenchant criticism than Nietzsche gave it in this lecture. A plea is made for a more rational study of German, for a better style. Auerbach was at the height of his fame at the time of its delivery. *Auf der Höhe* had appeared in 1865, *Das Landhaus am Rhein* in 1868, *Wieder Unser* in 1871, *Zur guten Stunde* in 1872.

The third and last reference to Auerbach was made in 1873, in that part of the *Unzeitgemässe Betrachtungen* (I, 253) which deals with D. Fr. Strauss. It is again a question of Auerbach's style. Nietzsche says: "Ich erinnere mich, einen Aufruf von Berthold Auerbach 'an das deutsche Volk' gelesen zu haben, in dem jede Wendung undeutsch verschroben und erlogen war, und der als Ganzes einem seelenlosen Wörtermosaik mit internationaler Syntax glich." The work in question was unobtainable.

## II

It is not the purpose of this paper to defend Auerbach's style in the face of Nietzsche's attacks, though great critics have defended the former's method of writing. Eugen Zabel praised Auerbach's style and emphasized its "gesunde, plastische Kraft."<sup>1</sup> Rudolf von

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Berthold Auerbach. *Ein Gedenkblatt* (Berlin, 1882), p. 91.

Gottschall, though he condemned the style of *Waldfried* (1874), said of Auerbach's works in general: "Sein Stil ist frei von jeder Überschwenglichkeit, gemessen und gediegen . . . von plastischer Rundung und gesunder Tüchtigkeit, klar und mühelos."<sup>1</sup> It is our purpose at this point to compare the style of Auerbach with that of Nietzsche from the point of view of unusual words and alliterative and assonantal couplets.

Auerbach used a great number of uncommon expressions. He liked to coin words. Richard M. Meyer says (*Ges. d. deut. Lit. im 19. Jahr.*, p. 250) that he would coin a happy term and then say to his friends: "Ich schenke es Ihnen." Some of his more striking expressions are: "Die Söhnerin" (*Schwiegertochter*), "zuderhändig," "verkindelt," "gesprächsam," "Weltbeglückereien," "Die Niederbediensteten," "lächerig," "Lordsgott," "Mitfreude" (which Auerbach used in his translation of Spinoza and which Nietzsche used so frequently), "Erbweisheit," "Nebenauskind," "Die Weisung," "Katzenhimmelmäuselesangst," "Helfsucht" (which Auerbach hated as much as Nietzsche hated altruism), "bedenklich," "Bäderwitwe" (in the sense of a "college widow"), "Schlafmörder," "Preussenspeichler," "vorgeboren," "wunderig," "Hochpunkt," "Gedankenaar," "glanzig," "leidmüthig," "Die Meisterlichsten" (for *Die Besten*), "Goethereif" (coined by Auerbach), "Tabled'hotenkopf," "anfechtig," "Kleinresidenzlinge," "besitzstolz," and so on. Compounds of *über*<sup>2</sup> occur in great numbers: "übergenug," "überirdisch," "überweltlich," "Überwelt," "Übersinn," "überzwerch," "überhirnt," and "übernächig" (a common term with Nietzsche). And then such expressions as "feuerggefährliche Gedanken," "krankenwärterisches Nachgehen," "blickloser Blick," "einem in die Duznähe rücken" (cf. Nietzsche's "Pathos der Distanz"), "jenseits der Menschheit," "Spielmarken-Phrasen," "Sprach-Rabatt," "Sprachgarderobe."

As to *Übermensch*, Auerbach seems never to have used the term, though he was fond of its converse, *untermenschlich*. In *Rudolph*

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Deutsche Literatur des 19. Jahrhunderts*, p. 250.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. R. M. Meyer (p. 453): "Insofern denn ist der 'Übermensch' nur eine Fortsetzung anderer, bei Nietzsche (und teilweise schon vor ihm) nachzuweisender 'Überbildungen': 'überhistorisch,' 'überpersönlich,' 'das Übertier,' 'überhell,' 'das Übernationale,' 'überdeutsch,' 'überklimatisch.'" Meyer does not, of course, mean that these are all of the compounds found in Nietzsche; our point is that Auerbach's list is very long.

und Elisabetha (XIX, 67-68) he wrote: "Dieses Bettinisiren, wie ich es nennen möchte, ist nicht, wie Sie es bezeichnen, übermenschlich, sondern—wenn man so sagen kann—untermenschlich." He was, in short, interested in words. Of *naturwüchsig* he said (III, 147): "Ein schönes Wort; warum sagst du nicht naturwuchsig oder naturwachsigt." In his essay on the Goethe-Schiller monument in Weimar he comments on the beauty and fitness of *selbender*. In his criticism of *Emilia Galotti* he refers to the fact that the vocalization of Marinelli and Machiavelli are the same. In *Auf der Höhe* he blesses the German language because it contains the word *Mutter-seelenallein*. In *Waldfried* he emphasizes the importance of the fact that "Bismarck" is pronounced alike in all languages. And in the same work he wrote: "Annette begriff jetzt, wie man in solcher Einsamkeit sich getreu und fest im geistigen Leben erhalten und weiter bilden konnte und war glücklich, wenn sie für eine neue Anschauung ein Wort gefunden hatte. Sie sagte mir: 'Wie es Einsiedler der Religion giebt, so kann es auch Einsiedler der Bildung geben, die sich zum Höchsten bringen.'" We are reminded at once, in an indirect way, of Nietzsche's *Bildungsphilister*.

But one of the most striking similarities between the two is seen in their use of the word *Kinderland* in contradistinction to *Vaterland*. In *Schatzkästlein des Gevattersmanns* (p. 57) Auerbach wrote: "Deutschland unser Vaterland, Amerika unser Kinderland. Die da aufgewachsen sind in Deutschland finden selten ihr wahres und volles Gedeihen in der neuen Welt; es sind Wurzeln der Erinnerung ausgerissen und abgehackt, an denen man alle Zeit krankt, die Kinder aber gedeihen in der neuen Heimat, sie finden eine solche in ihr. Fahr wohl, o Vaterland, nimm uns auf, o Kinderland!" The meaning of the passage is clear and though seemingly different it yet bears a close resemblance to Nietzsche's use of the term in *Zarathustra*. Nietzsche wrote (VI, 177, 297, 311): "So liebe ich allein noch meiner Kinder Land, das unentdeckte, im fernsten Meere." And: "Eurer Kinder Land sollt ihr lieben: diese Liebe sei euer neuer Adel." Nietzsche's meaning is likewise clear. He uses the genitive, not the nominative, case of the possessive pronoun. He had in mind the Germany of the future, the Germany of the children of the present generation, the Germany that might some time



come to pass if the aristocracy of the present were alert, if there were a sufficient number of men striving to be supermen. Auerbach and Nietzsche both liked to coin words. Richard M. Meyer said (p. 692): "Ein Wörterbuch zu Nietzsche hoffe ich in nicht zu langer Zeit zu veröffentlichen."

But Auerbach and Nietzsche were most alike in their use of assonantal and alliterative couplets. Auerbach's writings teem with such pairs as: Heerkuh-Herzkuh, zaudern-zögern, glitzert-glimmert, ziehen-zerren, Ergründer-Verkünder, Gehalt-Gestalt, Weltschmerz-Weltscherz, alt-kalt, schwimmen-schweben, Reu-Treu, grau-grauenhaft, vorderhand-nachderhand, einsam-arbeitsam, Einsamkeit-Gemeinsamkeit, auflösen-erlösen, Unabhängigkeit-Unanhänglichkeit. In *Zarathustra* we find such couplets as Einsiedler-Zweisiedler, umlernen-umlehren, achten-verachten, Schwärze-Schwere, Höhe-Helle, Wohltat-Wehtat, glimmt-glüht, Nächstenliebe-Fernstenliebe, verwinden-überwinden, lösen-erlösen, Neidbolde-Leidholde. There is, to be sure, a fundamental difference between the two. Nietzsche's<sup>1</sup> are bolder, more paradoxical, more original. But it is only a short step from the one type to the other.

### III

The main purpose of this paper, however, is to point out some similarities between Auerbach's *Auf der Höhe* (1865) and Nietzsche's *Also sprach Zarathustra* (1885) by way of attempting to prove that the latter contains echoes of the former. Let us list first a number of expressions common to both, taking those from Auerbach in the order in which they occur, and placing those from Nietzsche immediately after. The passages from Auerbach are all found in Irma's diary, Book VII, except the first one.

*Auerbach*: Ein Gedanke, ein Blitz, ein sinnverwirrender, zuckte durch ihre Seele: Das ist der Kuss der Ewigkeit! Flammende Lohe und Eisesstarren drängen sich zusammen. Das ist der Kuss der Ewigkeit!<sup>2</sup>

*Nietzsche*: Doch alle Lust will Ewigkeit.

<sup>1</sup> Richard M. Meyer contends (p. 417) that Nietzsche did not coin as many words in *Zarathustra* as in some of his other works, though he gives Nietzsche credit for *gleichwüchsig* and *totschweigsam*. We have already commented on Auerbach's remark on the affix *wüchs*, and words ending in *sam* are of frequent occurrence in his works. He uses, for example, *mitteilsam* in many places.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Book V, chap. viii. "Das ist der Kuss der Ewigkeit" is the psychological turning-point of Auerbach's novel. It would not be so striking were it not written in the same meter, and were it not repeated so often, just as in Nietzsche's *Zarathustra* in the last two chapters of the third book.

*Auerbach:* Am Ufer geschleudert—was soll ich nun? Bos leben, weil ich nicht tot bin? Tagelang, Nächtelang hielt mich diese Rätselfrage wie in der Schwebel zwischen Himmel und Erde, wie in jener grauenhaften Minute, da ich vom Felsen niederglitt.<sup>1</sup>

*Nietzsche:* Das aber glauben alle Dichter: dass wer im Grase oder an einsamen Gehängen liegend die Ohren spitze, etwas von den Dingen erfahre, die zwischen Himmel und Erde sind.

*Auerbach:* Ich habe keinen Spiegel in meinem Zimmer, ich habe mir vorgesetzt, mich selbst nicht mehr zu sehen.<sup>2</sup>

*Nietzsche:* Aber als ich in den Spiegel schaute, da schrie ich auf, und mein Herz war erschüttet, denn nicht mich sahe ich darin, sondern eines Teufels Fratze und Hohnlachen.

*Auerbach:* Ich muss noch täglich die Morgenschwere überwinden. Am Abend bin ich ruhig—ich bin müde.

*Nietzsche:* Zehn Mal musst du des Tages dich selber überwinden: das macht eine gute Müdigkeit und ist Mohn der Seele.

*Auerbach:* Einsam und arbeitsam, das ist mein Alles.

*Nietzsche:* Trachte ich denn nach Glücke? Ich trachte nach meinem Werke.

*Auerbach:* Die Wolkenbildungen und ihre Farben, die ich sonst nur hoch am Himmel sah, sehe ich jetzt auf der Erde und unter mir.

*Nietzsche:* Ich empfinde nicht mehr mit euch: diese Wolke, die ich unter mir sehe, diese Schwärze und Schwere, über die ich lache—gerade das ist eure Gewitterwolke. Ihr seht nach oben, wenn ihr nach Erhebung verlangt. Und ich sehe hinab, weil ich erhoben bin.

*Auerbach:* Ich habe zum erstenmal in meinem Leben ein Adlerpaar in den Lüften gesehen. Welch ein Leben, solch ein Adlerpaar! Sie schwebten im Kreise, hoch oben. Um was schwebten sie? Dann schwangen sie sich höher und verschwanden tief in den Lüften. . . . Der Adler hat niemand über sich, keinen Feind, der ihm beikommen kann.

*Nietzsche:* Und siehe! Ein Adler zog im weiten Kreise durch die Luft, und an ihm hing eine Schlange, nicht einer Beute gleich, sondern einer Freundin: denn sie hielt sich um seinen Hals geringelt.

*Auerbach:* Nichts Böses mehr tun—das ist noch nicht Gutes tun. Ich möchte eine grosse Tat vollziehen. Wo ist sie? In mir allein.

*Nietzsche:* Das Böseste ist nötig zu des Übermenschen Bestem.

<sup>1</sup> These passages are quoted because of the frequent occurrence in both works of the expression "zwischen Himmel und Erde."

<sup>2</sup> The frequent references by both Auerbach and Nietzsche to the mirror give these parallels their significance.

*Auerbach:* Der Ring ist geschlossen. Es kommt von aussen nichts Neues mehr, ich kenne alles, was da ist und kommen kann.

*Nietzsche:* Alles scheidet, Alles grüsst sich wieder; ewig bleibt sich treu der Ring des Seins.

*Auerbach:* Nimm du mich und trage mich, ich kann nicht weiter! ruft meine Seele. Aber dann raffte ich mich wieder auf, fasse Bündel und Wanderstab und wandere, wandere einsam und allein mit mir, und im Wandern gewinne ich wieder Kraft.

*Nietzsche:* Ich bin ein Wanderer und ein Bergsteiger, sagte er zu seinem Herzen, ich liebe die Ebenen nicht und es scheint, ich kann nicht lange still sitzen.

*Auerbach:* Der schöne Mensch ist der, der müssig geht, sich hegt und pflegt, sich entwickelt—so leben die Götter, und der Mensch ist der Gott der Schöpfung. Da ist meine Ketzerei. Ich habe sie gebeichtet.

*Nietzsche:* Aber dass ich euch ganz mein Herz offenbare, ihr Freunde: wenn es Götter gäbe, wie hielte ich's aus, kein Gott zu sein! Also gibt es keine Götter. Wohl zog ich den Schluss; nun aber zieht er mich.

*Auerbach:* Warum sagt man nur: Geh zum Kuckuck? Ich hab's gefunden: der Kuckuck hat kein eigen Nest, keine Heimat, er muss, nach der Volkssage, jede Nacht auf einem andern Baum schlafen. Geh zum Kuckuck! heisst also: Geh unstät und flüchtig, sei nirgends daheim.

*Nietzsche:* Aber Heimat fand ich nirgends: unstät bin ich in allen Städten und ein Aufbruch an allen Toren.

*Auerbach:* Es gibt Tage, wo ich den Wald nicht ertrage. Ich will keinen Schatten. Ich will Sonne haben, nichts als Sonne, Licht.

*Nietzsche:* "Wer bist du? fragte Zarathustra heftig, was treibst du hier? Und weshalb heissest du dich meinen Schatten? Du gefällst mir nicht."

*Auerbach:* Nun wird die Menschheit in Wahrheit zum Dichter, sie verdichtet unfassbare Kräfte, spricht zum Dampf, zum Licht, zum elektrischen Funken: komm, diene mir!

*Nietzsche:* Es ist mir nicht genug, dass der Blitz nicht mehr schadet. Nicht ableiten will ich ihn: er soll lernen für mich arbeiten.

*Auerbach:* Das Alleinsein macht oft dumpf, halbschlafend.

*Nietzsche:* Aber einst wird dich die Einsamkeit müde machen, einst wird dein Stolz sich krümmen und dein Muth knirschen. Schreien wirst du einst "ich bin allein."

*Auerbach:* Von allen Blumen finde ich auf der Rose den reichsten Morgentau. Macht das der reichste Duft? Ist der Duft taubildend? Kein grünes Blatt hat so viel Tau auf sich, als ein Blumenblatt.

*Nietzsche:* Was haben wir gemein mit der Rosenknospe, welche zittert, weil ihr ein Tropfen Tau auf dem Leibe liegt?

*Auerbach:* Ich meine, durch den Willen müsste sich der Tod besiegen lassen.

*Nietzsche:* Ja, noch bist du mir aller Gräber Zertrümmerer: Heil dir, mein Wille.

*Auerbach:* Fliegen—wir sehen eine ganz andere Lebenssphäre vor uns und können sie nicht fassen. Und wir glauben, wir verstehen die Welt? Was fest ist, fassen wir, und nur was fest davon ist—weiter hinein beginnt der grosse Gedankenstrich.

*Nietzsche:* Wer die Menschen einst fliegen lehrt, der hat alle Grenzsteine verrückt; alle Grenzsteine selber werden ihm in die Luft fliegen, die Erde wird er neu taufen—als "die Leichte."

*Auerbach:* Die Religion macht alle Menschen gleich, die Bildung ungleich. Es muss aber eine Bildung geben, die die Menschen gleich macht.

*Nietzsche:* Mit diesen Predigern der Gleichheit will ich nicht vermischet und verwechselt werden. Denn so redet mir die Gerechtigkeit: "Die Menschen sind nicht gleich."

*Auerbach:* Ich bin nun im dritten Jahre hier. Ich habe einen schweren Entschluss gefasst. Ich ziehe noch einmal in die Welt hinaus.

*Nietzsche:* Hier genoss er seines Geistes und seiner Einsamkeit und wurde dessen zehn Jahre nicht müde. Endlich aber verwandelte sich sein Herz. . . . Dazu muss ich in die Tiefe steigen.

*Auerbach:* Je höher der Wipfel steigt, umsomehr stirbt das Gezweige unten ab, es erstickt.

*Nietzsche:* Je mehr er hinauf in die Höfe und Helle will, um so stärker streben seine Wurzeln erdwärts, abwärts, ins Dunkle, Tiefe—ins Böse.

It will be noticed at once that some of these "parallels" are similar in thought, others similar in words though dissimilar in thought—the last one, for example. This difference, however, would not of itself disprove Auerbach's influence. A number of Nietzsche's best-known sayings and words grew out of his skeptical reading. We have but to think of the common word *Nächstenliebe* and Nietzsche's uncommon *Fernstenliebe*. That it is possible to stimulate

by friction is known to everyone. Nietzsche called Schiller "Der Moral-Trompeter von Säckingen." Auerbach said<sup>1</sup> of Schiller: "Wenn es eine Chemie des deutschen Geistes geben könnte, man würde bei einer exakten Analyse einen grossen Bestandteil finden, der Schiller heisst." In view of Nietzsche's opinion of "deutscher Geist," these two judgments may be antipodal, and then they may not.

And it is not simply in Irma's diary that we find ideas parallel to those in *Zarathustra*, but all through the novel. Irma says (Book II, 112): "Ich habe nur den Mut, immer zu sagen, was ich denke, und das kommt dann originell heraus." Aside from Nietzsche's genius, that is the explanation of his popularity; he said what he thought, and he was a great thinker. The König refers (II, 128), to the Leibarzt as "der ewig starre, seine Würde Wahrende." Irma cries out (II, 151): "Einsam und stark und ich selbst in mir." Auerbach himself says (II, 157): "Du grosser Weltbüttel, der du uns einspundest, dein Name ist Gewohnheit." The König says (III, 19): "Allen und Jedem misstrauen—das war die grosse Lehre." And it was Nietzsche's.

We have also the ecstatic style, the punctuation, the illustrations, based on the eagle, the cow, the mirror, the deep well, the rainbow, the child, the exhortation (VI, 150) to be "hart gegen sich und andere," the development of individuality, and the longing for the top of the mountain (VIII, 131) "die kein Menschenfuss betreten, nur die Wolken kommen dorthin und nur das Auge des Adlers ruht darauf."

#### IV

Parallels of this sort are, however, not sufficient to prove that Auerbach influenced Nietzsche. And Nietzsche never referred to *Auf der Höhe* in his writing. Is there any other sort of evidence in this connection?

Nietzsche began work on *Zarathustra*<sup>2</sup> in the winter of 1882, the year of Auerbach's death. With all of Nietzsche's detestation of newspapers, he could not have escaped notice of the event, for Auerbach was given a funeral second in pomp only to that accorded Klop-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Anton Bettelheim, *Tell-Studien von Berthold Auerbach* (Berlin, 1905), p. 125.

<sup>2</sup> The genesis of *Zarathustra* is set forth by Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche in *Nietzsche's Werke*, VI, 479-85.

stock. The region most intimately associated with the composition of *Zarathustra* is the Engadine. On the summit of one of the *bellevues* of this region there is a bench with the inscription: "Auerbachs Höhe."<sup>1</sup> Not far then from the spot where *Zarathustra* first *überfiel* Nietzsche, we have a constant reminder of the author of *Auf der Höhe*. Auerbach was a frequent visitor in this region. It is entirely possible that he met Nietzsche there in person; but we have no record of such a meeting.

And now as to the motivation. Why did Irma write her diary? The plot up to the beginning of its composition is briefly as follows: The King is the type of *eine heroische Natur*. He is an archindividualist. He stands on the heights, above his people, and for this very reason comes in conflict with his people. They want a constitution, but the King will not grant it; that would interfere with his individuality. He feels himself entirely beyond both the political and the moral law. He admires the Queen though he does not love her. She is taken from Jean Paul's novels. He falls in love with Irma, lady-in-waiting to the Queen. Irma and the King take one false step. It becomes noised abroad, public opinion scorns her, her father dies from grief, and life at the court becomes impossible for her. She leaves the court and goes to the mountains where she leads a life of loneliness, and where she writes her diary. She is penitent, but only so far as she feels responsible for the death of her father and the sadness of the Queen over the abuse of her trust and friendship; otherwise she is beyond the stupid, because, she says, conventional, laws of the world. She remains in the mountains until her death. The *Pechmännlein* who aids her in her wood-carving is the one individual whom she sees with anything like frequency. *Pech* also plays a rôle in *Zarathustra*, though this point could easily be pushed too far.

Why did Auerbach, surrounded as he was by friends, write this work? He never committed any great wrong that would force him to flee from men. It is indubitably an indirect tribute to Baruch Spinoza (Auerbach's real name was Moyses Baruch). Auerbach was a profound student of Spinoza. His novel *Spinoza* appeared

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Franz Dingelstedt, *Literarisches Bilderbuch* (Berlin, 1878), pp. 213-57, which deal with Auerbach under the rubric "Auerbachs Höhe."

in 1837, his translation of Spinoza's works in 1841. And just as the excommunicated Spinoza retired unto himself and wrote his *Ethics* (1665), so does the ostracized Irma retire unto herself and write her ethical diary (1865). Irma's diary sounds in places almost like a translation of Spinoza's *Ethics*. The last words of Auerbach's novel on Spinoza are as follows (XI, 232): "Spinoza zog hin nach Rhynsburg und von da nach Voorburg und dem Haag und schrieb den theologisch-politischen *Traktat* und die *Ethik*. Einsam und abgeschieden verbrachte er fortan sein Dasein. . . . Es erstand kein Dichter wieder wie Spinoza, der so im Ewigen gelebt." Those words motivated Auerbach's novel.

Possibly, then, Nietzsche borrowed from Spinoza and not from Auerbach at all, for, though he does not mention Spinoza in his letters, and though there are no references to Spinoza in Nietzsche's life by his sister, there are forty-odd references<sup>1</sup> to Spinoza in Nietzsche's works. That some of these are unfavorable is of no consequence. As to the favorable ones, Nietzsche looked upon Spinoza as the wisest of sages, the great idealist, the great individualist who destroyed his emotions, the despiser of pity, the impossible husband, and as one of the four predecessors of Zarathustra, Empedocles, Heraclitus, and Goethe being the other three. In short, Nietzsche mentioned Spinoza more frequently than he did Auerbach. But there are a number of things that militate against the idea that Spinoza influenced<sup>2</sup> to any marked degree the composition of *Zarathustra*.

In the first place, we have to consider the motivation of *Zarathustra*. The idea had been in Nietzsche's mind for some time, but in 1882 it had to be written. Nietzsche, forsaken by the world at large, disappointed by his immediate friends, and out of harmony with things in general, concluded that new values must be set up,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. G. A. Dernoschek, *Das Problem des egoistischen Perfektionismus in der Ethik Spinozas und Nietzsches* (Annaberg, 1905), p. 11. Dernoschek cites the places in Nietzsche's works where reference is made to Spinoza. The index of the English edition (Macmillan) is unreliable here.

<sup>2</sup> It must be conceded that Spinoza's *Ethics* does sound much like *Zarathustra*. Spinoza defines *gut* and *schlecht*, for example, as follows: "Unter 'gut' verstehe ich das, von dem wir gewiss wissen, dass es uns nützlich ist. Unter 'schlecht' aber verstehe ich das, von dem wir gewiss wissen, dass es uns hindert, ein Gutes zu erlangen." That sounds remarkably like the code of both Irma and Zarathustra. See *Die Ethik von B. Spinoza*, translated by J. Stern (Leipzig, 1887), p. 253.

new doctrines preached, a new type of man proclaimed. His work was inspired largely by his own life, while Auerbach's novel came more nearly from a study of Spinoza. The inspiration of the former was direct, that of the latter indirect. It is somewhat as it was with *Wilhelm Meister* and the imitative works that followed: Goethe wrote his novel out of his own life, while Tieck, Eichendorff, and others wrote their *Reise- und Bildungsromane* partly in imitation of Goethe.

And then we have to view the matter also from the point of view of convenience and expediency. There is now a voluminous Spinoza literature in German, but the great bulk of it postdates the original conception, indeed the final composition, of *Zarathustra*. Auerbach's translation of Spinoza's works, and his novel on, and other commitments concerning, Spinoza would have been Nietzsche's most accessible sources in 1882 and earlier. Dernoschek suggests (p. 12) that Nietzsche possibly knew Kuno Fischer's treatise on Spinoza when he wrote his *Zur Genealogie der Moral* (1887). Be this true or not, let us remember what Nietzsche said in 1872: "Ich kann Auerbach nicht mehr lesen." While this proves that he was reading him at the time, it does not prove that he did not read him later.

## V

In his *Nietzsche*, Richard M. Meyer makes, for this paper, two significant remarks (346): "'Noch einen Tropfen aus dem Gedankenmeer!' rief wohl in seiner naiven Freude an gedanklicken Funden und Fündlein Berthold Auerbach. Mit grösserem Rechte möchte man das ausrufen, wenn aus dem Meere der Gedanken Nietzsches das Wesentliche herausgeholt werden soll." But Meyer never said in so many words that Auerbach may have influenced Nietzsche, nor has anyone else. And again (p. 562): "Man wird erstaunen, wie oft die originellsten Gedanken der grossen Einsamen schon in der Luft lagen." The truth of this statement cannot be too highly valued. As soon as thinking men begin to discuss the relation of men to the world, their ideas must cross, their thoughts must be at times the same. All men of the type of either Auerbach or Nietzsche have their spiritual ancestors. Meyer lists (pp. 79-97) the following as constituting the most important predecessors of



Nietzsche—as his “verwandte Naturen”: Carlyle, G. F. Daumer, Eugen Dühring, Emerson, Gustave Flaubert, Goethe, Heinse, Karl Hillebrand, Hölderlin, Ibsen, Wilhelm Jordan, Paul de Lagarde, Siegfried Lipiner, Ernest Renan, Ruskin, George Sand, and Max Stirner. That is a formidable galaxy and in view of Meyer’s enormous *Belesenheit* it would be hazardous to gainsay it. But if we may depend upon the complete index to Nietzsche’s works, as compiled in the eighteenth volume of the Macmillan edition, Nietzsche never mentioned the following: Heinse, Ruskin, G. F. Daumer, Max Stirner, Wilhelm Jordan, Paul de Lagarde, and Lipiner.<sup>1</sup> And the same principle applies to *Zarathustra*. Many works<sup>2</sup> have been cited on which Nietzsche is supposed to have drawn for its composition, despite the fact that his sister says (VI, 479) that it is his “persönlichstes Werk . . . die Geschichte seiner innersten Erlebnisse.” But Auerbach has never been mentioned in this connection, though there is much in his works that sounds Nietzschean.

If, for example, Nietzsche never read Auerbach’s *Tausend Gedanken*,<sup>3</sup> we have to do here with a most unusual case of parallelism. Auerbach’s comment (p. 52) on “Vorhemdchens-Bildung, die eben nur so viel hat, als zum Gesehenwerden nötig ist,” is Nietzschean on general principles, and closely akin to Nietzsche’s frequent references to *Vordergrund* and its attending evils. His explanation of the Jews’ ability to endure suffering is precisely the same as that given by Nietzsche in his *Morgenröthe*. His notes (pp. 172 and 226) on the origins of the concepts *gut* and *böse* could not be more Nietzschean. But space forbids detailed quotation.

<sup>1</sup> Daumer, Lagarde, and Lipiner are, however, mentioned in Nietzsche’s letters, and the index to the English edition of Nietzsche’s works is incomplete.

<sup>2</sup> According to the introduction to the English edition, by Alexander Tille, and Hans Weichert in *Also sprach Zarathustra, erklärt und gewürdigt* (Leipzig, 1910), the following are some of the more important works that may have influenced Nietzsche in the composition of *Zarathustra*: The Avesta, the writings of Plato and Heraclitus, the Bible, St. Augustine’s *Confessions* and *City*, Erasmus’ *Lob der Torheit*, Hölderlin’s *Hyperion*, Jordan’s *Nibelungen*, Carl Spitteler’s *Prometheus und Epimetheus*, Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress*, *Piers the Ploughman*, Rüchert’s *Weisheit des Brahmanen*, Goethe’s *Divan*, Dahn’s *Odhins Trost*, F. T. Vischer’s *Auch Einer*, and a number of works by Gutzkow, whom Nietzsche especially disliked.

<sup>3</sup> The complete title of the book is *Tausend Gedanken des Collaborators*. The “collaborator” is Auerbach himself. The book contains about 1,000 aphorisms. It was published at Berlin in 1875. The copy in the New York Public Library was presented by Auerbach to George Bancroft, and contains a personal note by the author.

Both Auerbach and Nietzsche were much given to repetition; there are certain themes and conceits to which they were constantly returning. Of these the four most important are: *die Einsamkeit*, *die Sittlichkeit*, *die Ewigkeit*, and *der Wille*. If the two had never used the same concrete figures, their common use of these abstract ones alone would be sufficient to make one suspect that the one influenced the other; but then there come, aside from those already mentioned, a number of tangible similarities such as their common references to *die scheckige Kuh*, *die Glocke*, *der Verbrecher*, *Prometheus*, and so on, and suspicion is turned into belief.

Nietzsche was not an omnivorous reader, but a very rapid one. We come across the remark every now and then in his letters that on a certain day he read a certain book, sometimes a very large one, Malvida von Meysenbug's *Memoiren*, for example. Auerbach, Freytag, and a few others were the favorite writers of the scholarly reading public in Germany from about 1870 to 1880. Nietzsche knew the works of these men, for it was the Germany of those years in which he was particularly interested and with which he was particularly dissatisfied. The fact that he disliked the literature that was then being written is of negligible importance. The point is this: Nietzsche stands out in gigantic relief between his predecessors and his successors. A great deal of effective work has been done by way of attempting to show his influence on those who came after him. It was Nietzsche's peculiar type of greatness that inspired this method of approach. A reversal of the procedure by way of attempting to show what he owed to those who went before him might also be productive of illuminating results.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Arthur Drews, *Nietzsche's Philosophie* (Heidelberg, 1904), p. 112. Drews comments on Auerbach's popularity among the *Gebildete* of Nietzsche's time without intimating that the former may have influenced the latter.